

2017

College of Arts and Sciences Student Newsmagazine - Inaugural Issue

College of Arts and Sciences
Governors State University

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INAUGURAL
ISSUE

college of

Arts & SCIENCES

GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

2016-17

student magazine

Letter from the Dean

Welcome to the inaugural College of Arts and Sciences newsmagazine. As you will see, the newsmagazine serves as the perfect introduction to what we do best here at Governors State University, “offering an exceptional and accessible education that imbues students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in a global society.” We do so by creating spaces for real, hands-on experiences for our students that often result in beautifully produced final products such as the newsmagazine that you are currently reading. In this case, it was Ms. Laura White, a faculty member in our English program, who worked closely with a group of highly motivated students who laid out the newsmagazine, chased down the stories, and then wove them into the wonderfully rendered final product here. The stories in the newsmagazine provide a wide range of examples of this ethos across the arts and sciences. In addition,

you will also find evidence that the College of Arts and Sciences fully embraces GSU’s mission to create a “stimulating public square.” From the promotion of gender and sexuality equity vis-à-vis our relationship with Argonne National



DR. ANDRAE MARAK, DEAN

Laboratory to the sponsorship of Presidential Debate Watches to innovative pedagogical strategies in the classes of Drs. Deborah James and Patrick Santoro to the promotion of student research in STEM fields, the College of Arts and Sciences offers students cutting-edge educational opportunities.

Despite the budget constraints that we face, my promise to you is that we will do everything that we can to advance a mission-driven agenda that first and foremost focuses on what is best for students. We can use your help. Please talk to your political representatives and let them know just how much public education means to you. In addition, if you are interested in giving back, we are interested in hearing from you. You can give back by getting involved here at GSU, volunteering your time, or by donating to our foundation.

As always, I will strive to be a good steward of the College and sincerely look forward to working with each and every one of you and serving you in the best manner possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at amarak@govst.edu.

DR. ANDRAE MARAK
Dean

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Constitution Day

Dr. Khalil Marrar, Associate Professor of Political Science, Vincent Jones, Associate Professor in Criminal Justice, and Dr. Ellie Walsh, Assistant Professor of Social Science, delivered an impactful presentation before a crowded Hall of Governors.

BY MICHAEL CAPECCI

During an intense election season, Governors State University made it a point to celebrate Constitution Day in a special way. The Hall of Governors was filled with students and faculty who gathered to hear the lectures of three professors from the College of

theme than years past. During Dr. Khalil Marrar's portion, he reminded the crowd of something that is often overlooked: "The settlers of this country came here as refugees."

The final half hour of the presentation was dedicated to a question and answer session,

"The settlers of this country came here as refugees."

Arts and Sciences.

Organizer, Dr. Amanda Athon, a composition and rhetoric scholar, aimed the celebration at overcoming the crisis of mixed opinions over accepting refugees into the United States, giving this year's celebration a more centralized

during which the students of the crowd were encouraged to engage directly with the professors.

Taking place only months before the election, our 2016 Constitution Day celebration reminded us that the Constitution exists to empower and protect us all. §



DR. KHALIL MARRAR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE



DR. ELLIE WALSH, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCE SPEAKS TO STUDENTS AT THE CONSTITUTION DAY GATHERING

From the Caribbean to the Classroom

BY MICHAEL CAPECCI

In honor of National Hispanic Heritage month, Dr. Rey Andujar presented *Tiznao*—the short film that is taking the Latin American film industry by storm—to his literature classes. Andujar wrote the film's screenplay based on his 2012 novel, *Candela*.

Tiznao is a film about a Cuban

his debt, the hurricane is the lesser threat. The film explores desperation and the will to survive.

“Through his actions, and the actions of those he speaks with over the course of the day, students can hopefully become more familiar with the way that real people get through these situations,” said Dr. Andujar.

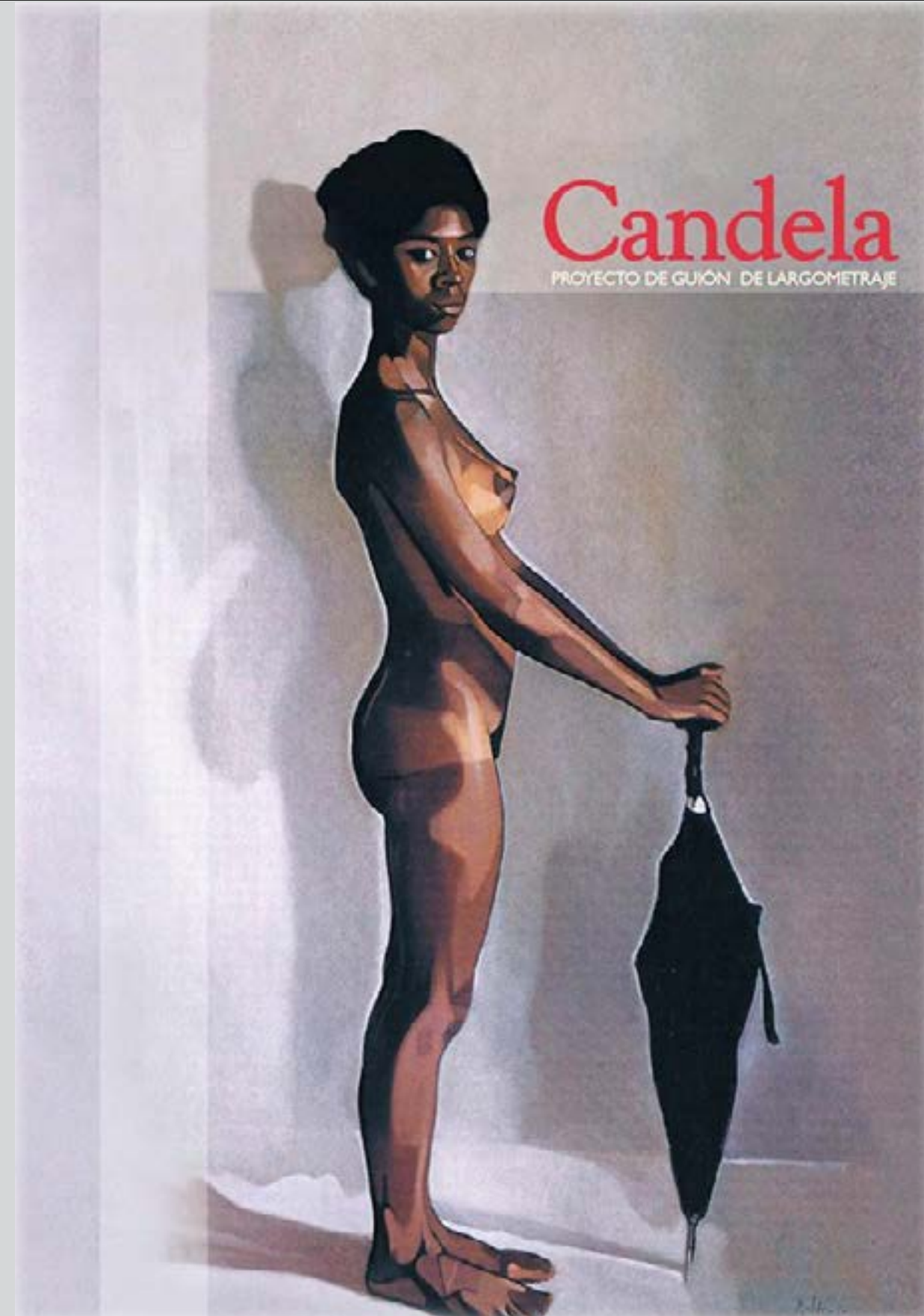
The film has received funding from the Dominican Republic and is being screened in film festivals across the Caribbean, Europe, and the United States.



DR. REY ANDUJAR, VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HUMANITIES

man whose life depends on repaying a debt he can't pay—*during a hurricane*. Students watching the film could not comprehend the man's calm demeanor during such impending danger; in the face of

a Visiting Assistant Professor of Humanities who was born in the Dominican Republic. He moved to the United States after receiving his PhD in Caribbean Studies from the University of Puerto Rico. §



COVER: CANDELA



PHOTO STILL- *TIZNAO*

An Interdisciplinary Adventure

Dr. Santoro and Dr. James, professors from two distinct fields, co-teach a course that takes GSU students into Chicago to explore new media and live performance.

BY MISTURAT GANIYU

This past autumn, Dr. Patrick Santoro, Theatre and Performance Studies professor, and Dr. Deborah James, Media Studies professor, partnered up to create *Performing Bodies: Mediating the City*, a class that intertwines “new media and live performance.” “We are living in a virtual world and one of the aims of the class is to understand how the virtual merges with the live... What does that look like on stage? What does that look like in everyday life?” said Dr. Santoro.

Every Saturday, students ventured to the James R. Thompson Center in Downtown Chicago for the day-long class. This was the first time a GSU course has been held exclusively in Chicago, which is an attractive quality for students. “We figured that with the experiential nature of the two-course, 6 credit-hour



STUDENTS MEET IN CHICAGO FOR PERFORMING BODIES: MEDIATING THE CITY COURSE

experience, we might as well make it more experiential and get our students into the city,” said Dr.

Santoro.

Most of their students majored in Media Studies or Theatre and Performance Studies, but the course was open to students from all majors; and while these professors come from two different disciplines, they worked collaboratively. “We’ve studied the same artists but from different disciplines,” said Dr. James.

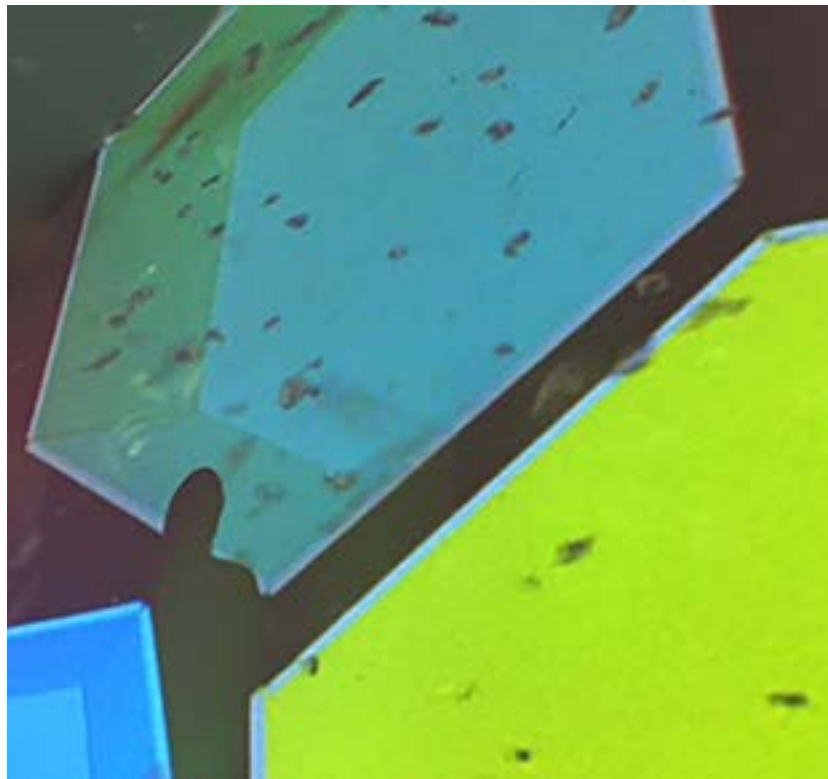
A typical day in this course began with a discussion about a case study assigned to the students. Next, the students got a hands-on experience lesson on media production. Later came field work, where students went out into the city to apply what they learned in regards to media production.

When they returned, the class participated in the first of two critiques. Afterwards, they revised their assignment for a final

critique. “There is an emphasis on art-making as a process full of revision,” said Dr. Santoro.

Throughout the course, students regularly posted reflections about their experience in the [course blog](#). At the end of the course, students presented their work in a public showcase.

Dr. James explained the benefits of taking a course like this: “We don’t know what new thing is coming, and a course like this helps you prepare to know that—no matter what—you have to come up with the skills, the intelligence, and the research to be able to accommodate that which has yet to be invented.” §



“There is an emphasis on art-making as a process full of revision.”



Learning All Year Long

At the regenerated BCS Division Seminar Series, student researchers present their summer internship research.

BY MISTURAT GANIYU

In 2016, Dr. Sowa, Division Chair of Chemistry and Biological Sciences, renewed a BCS Division Seminar Series that invites students, faculty, and staff to learn about different aspects of science from Chicagoland professionals.

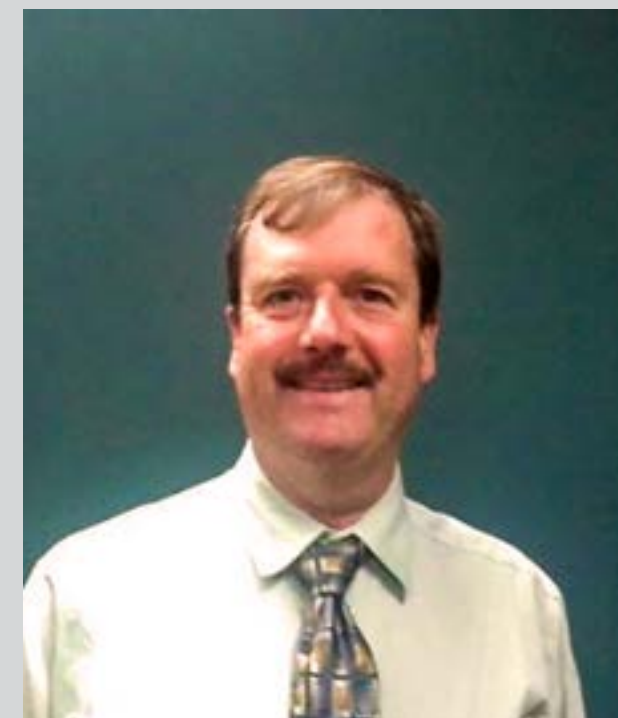
For the first seminar in the series titled “What I Did Last Summer,”

idea is that when they start doing their research, they’re doing it with the end goal of being able to tell a story.... It encourages them to analyze their results and to think about future experiments,” Dr. Sowa explained.

Vanity Spruill, an Interdisciplinary Studies major with a Biology

microbial community diversity and structure in a widespread neotropical ant species.

Melissa Franco and Reni Truhtcheva Owikota interned at GSU’s Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP), a program run by the National Science Foundation.



DR. JOHN SOWA, DIVISION CHAIR OF CHEMISTRY AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Life Grant to help fund next semester’s BCS Division Seminar Series. §

“It encourages them to analyze their results and to think about future experiments.”

he invited GSU student researchers to present on their own summer research internships.

“I ask them to present at the end of the summer, but I know that their research programs at their separate sites also said that they’re going to have a presentation, so the

concentration, interned at the University of Chicago’s Grove Laboratory.

Dreyvon McCray, a Chemistry major, interned at the Chicago Field Museum under the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program. He studied

These students kicked off the BCS Division Seminar Series by delivering their research. In the weekly seminars following, GSU science professors and Chicagoland professionals presented science-related research.

Dr. Sowa received an Intellectual

Presidential Debate Watch

During the election season, students and faculty gathered on campus to watch two presidential debates.

BY MISTURAT GANIYU

This past election brought unique opportunities for students to participate in civic engagement. Dr. Jayne Goode, Assistant Professor of Communication along with her Communications colleague Dr. David Rhea brought students and

in the political process,” Dr. Goode said.

Eighty students attended the first of two Presidential Debate Watch events. Most of them were freshmen. They laughed, clapped, and groaned, reacting to the candidates’ responses while they

The debate watch sparked conversations both in and out of the classroom. While Dr. Goode incorporated the watch event into her class lectures, some of her students wanted to talk to her about their opinions right after the debate. “Democracy means that

Dr. Goode noted the significance of those gatherings: “When we have shared experience—particularly those that are illuminating in some ways—we begin to create a stronger community.”

A second debate watch was held for the third presidential debate.

“When we have shared experience—particularly those that are illuminating in some ways—we begin to create a stronger community.”

faculty together to watch the first presidential debate.

“Both Dr. Rhea and I have been involved in these at previous institutions and we find that they are exceptional at getting students exposed to the news of the day and sparking interest in participating

ate pizza.

“I really liked it. I think it’s great that GSU gets students involved in politics especially since most of us are first-time voters,” said M’lyssa Bauske, freshman honors student.

Student senate members set up a voter registration table.

people have choices and they make decisions based on what would benefit people, and so it’s really important to me that students think about how they contribute and sometimes how they don’t contribute to a democratic society,” said Dr. Goode.

GSU Intellectual Life Committee sponsored both events; one of its missions is “to expand the intellectual opportunities available to the GSU community.” §



FRESHMEN HONORS STUDENTS (L-R) MIRLETTE REBOLLEDO, AMBER BROOKS, M'LYSSA BAUSKE, AND DREW TRAVERS



STUDENTS AT THE DEBATE WATCH

Gender and Communication Beyond the Classroom

A GSU faculty-alumna collaboration brings gender identity into the workplace.

BY MISTURAT GANIYU

Collaboration can occur in unexpected places.

At an external board meeting about the new Gender and Sexuality studies program, GSU alumna Dr. Tina Henne, Postdoctoral Programs Lead

can be transferable: “In talking with Dr. Henne about the program that was developing at Governors State, it occurred to me that having knowledge of current work in gender studies can be very valuable to women who are working in male-

After collaborating with Dr. Finney, Dr Zingsheim delivered a presentation titled “Identities at Work and Working Identities.” About the presentation, Dr. Henne explained, “I think he opened up a window to what the different

hosted the forum. “Sometimes when you’re talking about gender issues that women face, and in the case of Dr. Zingsheim’s talk on gender identities and how we address that in the workplace, there is some overlap in our interest and the types

“It’s always fun and encouraging to see GSU students out in their own world and to see the ways they take ownership of what they believe in.”

at National Argonne Laboratory, saw potential for applying theory of gender and identity in the workplace. Dr. Henne is actively involved with Argonne’s Women in Science & Technology program (WIST) in addition to being an Adjunct Professor at GSU.

Dr. Lydia A. Finney, WIST Program Initiator, Physicist, and University Partnership Program manager, was also interested in how those skills

dominated fields—like science.”

As a result, Dr. Jason Zingsheim, Associate Professor of Communications and Coordinator of the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, partnered with Dr. Henne to speak at Argonne’s First Friday Forum hosted by WIST. First Friday Forum is “a monthly networking brown-bag lunch focusing on matters of interest to Argonne scientific and technical women.”

gender and sexual identities are, how it might feel to be placed in a ‘different group,’ getting us thinking more along the lines of how we can all be allies to support each other.” Dr. Zingsheim noted, “Every workplace has the potential to be diverse and then to use that diversity to fuel innovation and creative problem-solving.”

Spectrum, an LGBTQ+ employee resource group at Argonne, co-

of awareness that we’re trying to promote. So we often partner with other groups here on site to host these events,” said Dr. Henne.

Dr. Zingsheim noted, “It’s always fun and encouraging to see GSU students out in their own world and to see the ways they take ownership of what they believe in.”

Dr. Henne added, “As a GSU alumna, I hope to continue working with the university.” §

Dr. Bruce Wins National Award

Dr. Mary Bruce honored with Pi Alpha Alpha's Chapter Advisor for the year.

BY MISTURAT GANIYU

In August of last year, Dr. Mary Bruce, Public Administration professor, was honored with Chapter Advisor for the year for her work with Governors State University's chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha, a national honor society for public administration graduate students. She received the award from The Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). She was nominated by Tasha Baker, GSU alumna and chapter president.

In addition to her personal honor, GSU's chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha won Chapter of the Year—despite the fact that Dr. Bruce started the chapter just two years earlier. Dr. Bruce herself became a Pi Alpha Alpha member while earning a master's degree in Public Administration from Oakland University.

Dr. Bruce sees the honor society and its exacting requirements (a



DR. MARY BRUCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROFESSOR

3.7 GPA over two semesters) as giving students a reason to excel: "When students are given the opportunity to soar, that is what they do. Sometimes people just need the opportunity. Pi Alpha Alpha

has given students an organization [that encourages them] to aim high."

For twelve years, Dr. Bruce has been a Public Administration professor at Governors State. About

the program, she commented, "We're training and educating public managers. As they run their offices, we encourage them to provide good service and to be kind. That is what I teach my students." §

Professor Creates, Student Curates

GSU student and professor collaborate at up-and-coming arts collective.

BY MICHAEL CAPECCI

While she regularly curates shows in the GSU Visual Arts gallery, it was a rare morning that Victoria Strole, graduate student in Art History, discovered what she would be doing from June 24 to July 9 2016. She would be curating a show at Feed Arts and Cultural Center featuring the work of Gretchen Jankowski, GSU professor of printmaking.

Feed is an up-and-coming arts collective in the center of downtown Kankakee. One of the organization's missions is "to encourage and nurture emerging and established artists." As a matter of fact, its founders—and several of its contributing artists—are alumni of GSU.

While Professor Jankowski teaches printmaking at GSU, she is also a highly innovative mixed-media artist: "This is art that belongs in



PROFESSOR GRETCHEN JANKOWSKI (LEFT) AND VICTORIA STROLE (RIGHT)

the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago," said Strole.

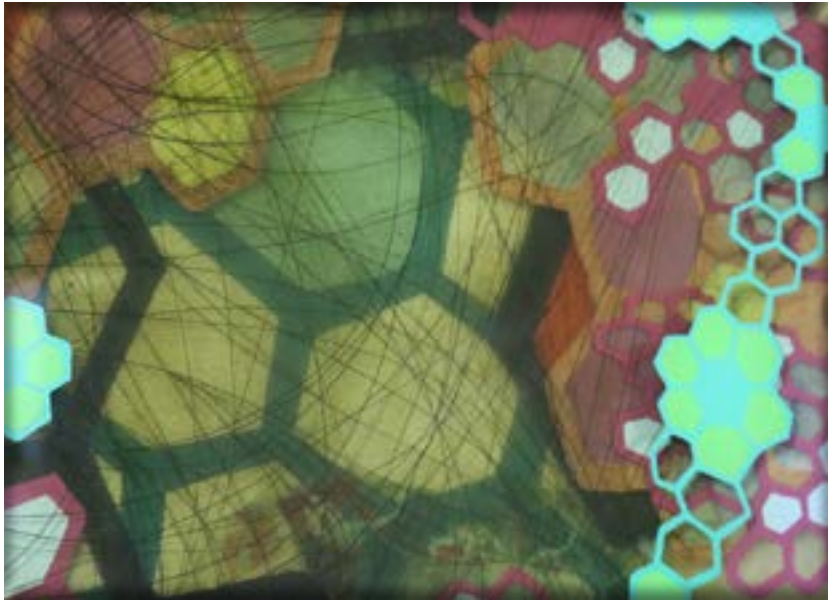
Jankowski's work is unlike much

of what appears in traditional art shows. Her artist statement is perhaps the best way to describe

it: "My work is unabashedly about pleasure through all the senses, especially visual, and tactile. I want viewers to stroke and even sit on the work, to experience it firsthand, to leave their imprints." Several of the pieces Strole chose to include in the show were furniture-like installations that people actually sat on, and some children happily played on.

Strole described her collaboration with a professional artist as rewarding: "It was a good chance to work outside the GSU gallery, which was another step toward professionalism."

For more information about Feed Arts and Cultural Center and its effort to bring people together through art, visit feedarts.org. §



CLOSE-UPS OF JANKOWSKI'S ARTWORK

Science Beyond the Lab

Graduate student presents scientific research on bees and urges community to take action.

BY ARYANA ADKANIAN

To some, honeybees are simply buzzing distractions. To graduate student and environmental biology major Neal Jankowski, honeybees are the main subject of his current research.

Jankowski has been researching honeybees and other bee species for several years. His research concerns how honeybees are non-native to America and, despite popular belief, are one of several bee species. “There is a wide variety of bee species beyond honeybees and bumblebees. There are 100-plus bee species in Illinois,” said Jankowski.

Jankowski’s research has confirmed that many bee species are steadily declining. To help native bees survive, “don’t use pesticide, provide pollen and nectar by planting prairie plants native to Illinois, ensure bees have nesting sites, protect hibernation habitats



GRADUATE STUDENT NEAL JANKOWSKI AT WORK IN THE LAB

for queens by avoiding raking, tilling or mowing your lawn until April or May,” said Jankowski.

On December 6, 2016, Jankowski discussed his research during an hour-long presentation sponsored by SciencePub, a community organization bringing together

average people with an interest in science. SciencePub holds monthly meetings at the Ravisloe Country Club in Homewood.

Public speaking may intimidate some people, but Jankowski is committed to advocating his research to the public. He enjoys

leading presentations for an interested audience. He says that the key to a successful scientific presentation is for the presenter to know the audience’s familiarity with the subject so the presentation can be tailored to their knowledge level.

Jankowski also presented on bee species at the Illinois State Academy of Science’s annual conference on March 31, 2017 at Harper College in Palatine. For further information on Jankowski’s research, feel free to contact him at njankowski@student.govst.edu. §



STORAGE TUBES AND DIFFERENT SPECIES OF BEES, INCLUDING LONG HORN BEES (*MELISSODES* SPECIES), GREEN SWEAT BEES (*AUGOCHLORINI* SP.) AND BUMBLEBEES (*BOMBUS* SP.)

Collaborators, Researchers, and Colleagues

Dr. Angela Thompson and her students pave the way for the future of math education.

BY CARRIE SZMUKSTA

Dr. Angela Thompson is not your ordinary professor. In addition to being the Assistant Professor for Mathematics and the Coordinator for the Secondary Mathematics Education program, she works with her students inside and outside of the classroom. For the past few years, Dr. Thompson has been going above and beyond for her students in helping them achieve their post-graduation goals.

In 2016, Dr. Thompson assisted multiple students in presenting at conferences pertaining to their studies in Math, but she has been working with students on presentations since 2012. Some of these included presenting for the California Mathematics Council, the Annual Conference for the Advancement of Mathematics Teaching, the Chicago Symposium Series, and Illinois Teacher



DR. ANGELA THOMPSON, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS

Performance Assessment Consortium.

She has invited many students to conduct research as well as present their findings at conferences. Specifically, every student teacher and every graduate and undergraduate who worked as Supplemental Instructors with

her has had this opportunity. As Supplemental Instructors, these students attend Dr. Thompson's classes to help inspire, instruct, and engage the students. They also work to uncover the best methods for teaching according to latest research.

She also expressed excitement, simply for working with her students as future co-workers, assisting them with the presentations, which would give them the tools for their own future after Governors State. "I felt proud to stand in front of a room full of professionals with my students who had turned into collaborators, researchers, and colleagues through these experiences. I also felt that working together may have helped to plant research ideas into graduating GSU mathematics students," Dr. Thompson said.

Dr. Thompson is also inspired

by one of her students, Dreyvon McCray, a student she has mentored since meeting him in her College Algebra class in 2012. "Whenever and wherever I see him, I always have a big smile on my face. Because that's what he has on his face! I have endeavored to support him in all of his goals and dreams, and done my best to provide him with resources and ideas," said Dr. Thompson when asked about her student-mentor partnership with McCray. Dr. Thompson has helped McCray as well with the presentations and was working with him to obtain an internship at Argonne National Laboratory. §

A Story to Tell and an Ear to Listen

No voice went unheard as students, faculty, and family read at the 28th Annual National African American Read-In.

BY EASLYN EDWARDS

On February 27th, over thirty people sat quietly in the Hall of Honors listening as students, faculty, and their family read poems and short stories. The 28th Annual National African American Read-In was underway. Dr. Andrae Marak, Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, gave the audience a warm welcome, setting the friendly and open tone of the night. Audience members were treated to a great night of African American literary art. The ages of the readers ranged from grade schooler to college professor, but everyone who read did so articulately and proudly. One by one, people stood in line waiting for their turn. So many people wanted to read that Dr. Rashidah Muhammad, English professor and Mistress of Ceremony, joked “We’ll have to do three hours next time.”

Dr. Muhammad and Dr. Marak have had strong involvements with



DR. RASHIDAH MUHAMMAD, MISTRESS OF CEREMONY, SPEAKING TO THE AUDIENCE

the African American Read-Ins. Dr. Muhammad first began her involvement as a graduate student at Michigan State University in 1990, and she continued her support of the African American Read-In as a member of the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English. Dr. Marak’s

involvement began in 2004 while teaching in Pennsylvania and continued after an invitation from Dr. Muhammad. Dr. David Golland, history professor specializing in African American history, read at the event for his sixth time.

Faculty from various disciplines read poems with words of

encouragement for students. Some faculty made the African American Read-In a family affair. Sheree Sanderson, Assistant Dean of Students, and her grandson and granddaughter each read poems. Ms. Sanderson’s grandchildren were among the younger performers that also included two sisters who performed “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou and “Ballad of Birmingham” by Dudley Randall.

It was a great night for GSU and everyone involved with the 28th Annual National African American Read-In. For anyone wanting to read in next year’s read-in, Dr. Muhammad’s advice to novice readers is “Select a piece that speaks to you on a cultural, political, or historical level. Identify with its elements, then expand your world by reading various selections of African American literature.” §

Faculty News/Contact Info

Faculty Awards/ Publications

DR. MARY BRUCE

- NASPAA Public Service Award

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR SANJAYA RANMOHOTTI

- “Crystal structure of BaMnB2O5 containing structurally isolated manganese oxide sheets”
Crystallographic Communications, Vol. 72, Part 9, September 2016

DR. JOHN SOWA (WITH JACK NORTON, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY)

- “Chemical Reviews: Metal Hydrides”
Chemical Reviews Thematic Issue: Metal Hydrides, Vol. 116, Issue 15, August 2016

PROFESSOR XIAOYONG CHEN AND PROFESSOR EMERITUS KAREN D’ARCY

- “Impacts of Plant Community Changes on Soil Carbon Contents in Northeastern Illinois”
Communications in Soil Science and Plant Analysis, Vol. 47, Nos. 13-14, July 2016

Faculty and Alumni:

We would love to include your accomplishments in future editions of the CAS Newsletter.

Please send your news and updates to:

casnewsletter@govst.edu

Help us keep these and other great things happening!

To get involved and volunteer for the College of Arts and Sciences contact Luke Helm:

(Lhelm@govst.edu).

[Consider donating to the College of Arts and Sciences](#)